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Testimony in Support of SB 132 AAC Dog Racing

General Law Committee

February 20, 2024

Colette Griffin, Board Chair, CT Votes for Animals

Senator Maroney and Representative D'Agostino, Vice Chairs, Ranking Members and Honorable Members of the General Law Committee, on behalf of CT Votes for Animals (CVA), I thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of SB 132, An Act Concerning Dog Racing. CVA is a grass-roots animal advocacy organization representing over 8,000 supporters in almost every legislative district in the State.

Greyhound racing is a cruel and grossly inhumane form of gambling. These lovely dogs endure lives of confinement in cages barely large enough to stand up or turn around, suffer serious injuries while racing, and are killed when they become unprofitable. In addition to this abuse, live lure training uses small animals, such as rabbits and baby pigs, to enhance a dog's chase instinct. According to the National Greyhound Association, there are 300 greyhound breeding facilities and kennels in the United States adding to the already overburdened pet overpopulation crisis.

In response to the public's revulsion with the cruel practice of greyhound racing, there has not been an active dog racetrack in Connecticut for almost 20 years. Plainfield Greyhound Park operated from 1976 to 2005 and the Shoreline Star greyhound racing facility in Bridgeport opened in 1995 and closed in 2005. Connecticut residents expressed a collective sigh of relief when the state closed its dog racetracks, and many would be shocked to learn a technical loophole exists in which live greyhound racing could resume without scrutiny.

Across the country, dog tracks are closing, and greyhound racing is a dying industry. According to Grey2K USA, greyhound racing is illegal in 42 states and is practiced in only one: West Virginia. This decline is the result of increased public awareness that racing dogs is cruel and inhumane. Unfortunately, Connecticut is one of seven states (along with Alabama, Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Texas, and Wisconsin) with no active tracks, but where dog racing remains legal. Connecticut needs to follow the lead of 42 other states that have outlawed this cruel practice.

SB 132 is an opportunity to formally close the statutory book on live greyhound racing and ensure that the promise to the people of Connecticut is kept.

On behalf of all supporters of CT Votes for Animals, I urge the committee to act favorably on SB 132, AAC Dog Racing.

Testimony in Support of Raised Senate Bill 132 Dog Racing

General Law Committee

February 20, 2023

Karen Laski

Dear Honorable Members of the General Law Committee,

I strongly support Senate Bill 132, An Act Concerning Dog Racing. There was a tremendous amount of YAY votes last year to make sure that the cruelty of dog racing does not surface again in Connecticut, but there was not enough time for the final vote in the Senate. Please make sure that this year the bill swiftly goes to both chambers for strong votes of compassion.

I protested both race tracks in their sad days 25 years ago and I hope this will be the session that makes Connecticut the 43rd state to keep dogs out of this heartless operation.

Thank you for all your work.

Karen Laski

Glastonbury